



# University College Dublin

## Quality Improvement Plan

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UCD School of Veterinary Medicine

August 2023

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## 1. Introduction

The quality review of the UCD School of Veterinary Medicine was undertaken in November 2022. The Review Group Report was received in January 2023 and discussed within the School. A Quality Improvement Committee was formed, consisting of:

- Dean Full Prof. Michael Doherty - (Chair/Dean & Head of School)
- Assoc. Prof. Rory Breathnach - (Clinical Director UCDVH)
- Assoc. Prof. Sue Rackard - (Assoc. Dean for Teaching & Learning)
- Assistant Prof. Colm Reid - (Assoc. Dean for Admissions & Student Affairs)
- Mr John Buckley - (Director, School of Veterinary Medicine Office)
- Ms Karen O'Connell - (Project Co-ordinator)

A dedicated meeting of the School Executive Committee was held on the 15<sup>th</sup> of March 2023 to facilitate a discussion on any feedback from staff in the School through the School's six academic sections. The response to each of the recommendations of the Review Group was discussed and agreed, with further considerations, amendments and edits by one-to-one meetings and email.

## UCD School of Veterinary Medicine -Quality Improvement Plan

### 2. Recommendations for Improvements - Follow-Up Action Taken and/or Planned

#### Categories

1. Recommendations concerning academic, organisational and other matters which are entirely under the control of the unit
2. Recommendations concerning shortcomings in services, procedures and facilities which are outside the control of the unit
3. Recommendations concerning inadequate staffing, and/or facilities which require additional recurrent or capital funding

#### Timescale

- A. Recommendation already implemented
- B. Recommendations to be implemented within one year
- C. Recommendations to be implemented within 5 years
- D. Recommendations which will not be implemented

1. Prioritised Recommendations					
RG Report (Paragraph Reference)	RG Recommendation	Category (See above list)	Action Taken/Planned	Lead* (E.g. Name of Faculty/Staff/Group)	Timescale
2.14	The RG recommend the School introduce a formal process for staff induction to ensure that all administrative bases are covered for all staff. Consideration should also be given to introducing an informal 'buddy system' as part of the induction.	1  (recommendations concerning academic, organisational & other matters <u>entirely under the control of the unit</u> )	As part of the School's application for the Silver Athena SWAN award (April 2023). The School's Equality Diversity & Inclusion /Athena SWAN committee has proposed a bi-annual networking event for all new School staff (including all staff categories and postdoctoral staff). The introduction of an informal Buddy or Champion system to guide new staff has also been proposed as actions in the School's Silver Athena SWAN Action Plan. In the UCD Veterinary Hospital (UCDVH), two staff members (an Assistant Professor and Associate Professor) are currently formulating an induction process, with a focus on clinical interns. Based on this pilot programme the School will also broaden the formulation of the induction	Director, School of Veterinary Medicine Office	C

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			<p>process to include all School staff in addressing this recommendation.</p> <p>Furthermore, the School has established a working group including a representative from the UCDVH (Clinical Director of the UCDVH/or nominee), a technical staff representative and an administrative/professional staff (Director, School of Veterinary Medicine Office or nominee) representative to implement this planned action which includes the following action points:</p> <p><b>Action 1:</b> Welcome to community piece/social event. Once or twice a trimester all new members of staff plus all School staff will be invited to say hello and have a cup of coffee in the Vet School.</p> <p><b>Action 2:</b> The welcome email for all new staff including those in the UCDVH will be sent to everyone in the School.</p> <p><b>Action 3:</b> College level event once a quarter for new colleagues on HR issues followed by a social event.</p>		

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			<p><b>Action 4:</b> There will be “a light touch” biographic feature for every new member of staff in the quarterly newsletter of the School.</p> <p><b>Action 5:</b> Produce a procedure/SOP package with everything relevant to induction including online resources/videos, health and safety.</p>		
2.15	Several clinical areas are understaffed, as is common in the sector. Many UK universities address this critical issue, in part, through the use of additional payments made to clinical staff, often funded from the commercial income that they effectively bring in through clinical work. In some cases this is a clinical supplement and in other cases this is through enhanced out of hours payments. The RG recommend the School explore whether such an approach could be developed to provide additional incentives within the UCD system. (Recommendation 2.15)	3  (recommendations concerning inadequate staffing, and/or facilities which require additional recurrent or capital funding)	The SVM has continually made the case to the University for the need to incentivise clinical staff to ensure continued high-level input and retention. This is a particular area of concern in relation to preventing the loss of highly valued staff to the private sector. The out-of-hours pay scales were agreed at the time (circa 2006) with the relevant government department however have not been reviewed for many years; in addition, they relate to being “on call” rather than performing additional clinical work at nights or weekends. As such, the monetary benefits are relatively low. Over the last year, the Dean and the Clinical Director of the UCD Veterinary Hospital have commenced discussions with UCD Finance to seek either enhanced On-Call pay rates, or an additional fee based on the performance of actual clinical duties (e.g., additional pay per hour of surgery). As part of this process, we have also highlighted the option of an agreed clinical supplement as part of the	<b>Assoc. Prof. Rory Breathnach</b> Clinical Director	C

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			<p>annual salary package, like the case pertaining in some UK Schools of Veterinary Medicine. All these options will need central University financial support. The School has also sought enhanced pay scales for more junior clinical staff (entry-level nurses, residents etc.) who find themselves on narrower pay scale bands. The School uses hospital income to incentivise staff by paying for additional conference attendance, discipline-specific equipment to facilitate clinical research, or advanced CPD (e.g. hip-replacement courses) where justified.</p> <p>The School will also review the workload model for clinical staff in the UCDVH.</p> <p>In order to provide the additional financial resources required to comply with this recommendation, a high level review will be necessary involving UCD Finance and UCD HR. The HR partner, bursar, college finance office and College Principal will meet with the Dean in autumn to initiate this process.</p>		
3.17	The RG recommend that all school staff who interact with students in an educational capacity should receive education in pedagogy that is relevant to their role. (Recommendation 3.17)	1  (recommendations concerning academic,	The UCD Centre for Veterinary Education was established in March 2023 following approval by Academic Council.	<b>Assoc. Prof. Sue Rackard</b> Assoc. Dean for Teaching & Learning	C

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1. Prioritised Recommendations					
RG Report (Paragraph Reference)	RG Recommendation	Category (See above list)	Action Taken/Planned	Lead* (E.g. Name of Faculty/Staff/ Group)	Timescale
		organisational & other matters <u>entirely under the control of the unit)</u>	<p>The objectives of this new combined research and CPD Centre, under the Directorship of Associate Professor Sue Rackard are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>·Conduct and disseminate research on topics in veterinary medical education to inform and enhance veterinary medical educational curriculum design practice.</li> <li>·Collaborate and undertake educational research projects with local, national and international partners.</li> <li>·Provide pedagogical, assessment and evaluation support for educators of veterinary medicine to implement research-based teaching. This will predominantly involve faculty as they deliver the majority of the teaching and will extend to all involved, which will include interns, residents, and potentially some technical staff.</li> </ul>		
6.13	Considerable emphasis is currently placed on day-to-day interactions with staff where feedback can be provided and while these informal mechanisms are important and reflect the strong sense of community within the School,	1  (recommendations concerning academic, organisation	<p>Student feedback is gathered systematically through the Staff-Student Liaison Committee, the Programme Board, the Curriculum Review Committee (CRC), stage-level focus groups and module feedback surveys.</p> <p>Student feedback on curriculum (teaching, learning and assessment) is fed into the Curriculum Review</p>	<b>Assoc. Prof. Sue Rackard</b> Assoc. Dean for Teaching & Learning	B

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1. Prioritised Recommendations					
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	more formal mechanisms ensure that everyone has an opportunity to be heard and is aware of how to provide feedback. The RG recommend the School develops a systematic framework for student feedback via fora such as Staff-Student Liaison meetings, with an agenda, minutes, clear leadership and clear communication of the School responses to feedback. (Recommendation 6.13)	al & other matters <u>entirely under the control of the unit</u>	<p>Committee (CR) (formally minuted meetings) by Student Representatives from all years who are formal members of the committee. Responses to that feedback are channelled back through those class representatives for dissemination with relevant student cohorts.</p> <p>In 2022, it was agreed that finalised stage focus group reports are channelled through the CRC where again the student representatives report back to their classes.</p> <p>The Staff-Student Liaison committee (also formally minuted meetings) manages feedback on more practical day-to-day matters and has the widest participation of staff and students invited. Staff membership includes the Dean, the Student Adviser, Stage Co-ordinators of both veterinary nursing and veterinary medicine as well as representatives from library, estate services and the UCD Veterinary Hospital. Student membership includes representatives from all years from both veterinary medicine and veterinary nursing.</p> <p>UCD is currently piloting an enhanced Student feedback system on modules and teaching. Our School is keen to enhance student feedback mechanisms available to us, so we are participating in this pilot this trimester.</p> <p>The School will also reactivate the annual School Assembly which stopped during the pandemic and which</p>		



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			was targeted at the students. All students will be invited to attend this assembly towards the end of the first Trimester and which will provide an opportunity both for updates on student-specific issues as well as for student feedback.		
6.15	The RG recommend a review and enhancement of widening participation within the School. This could include putting in place a system to track progress and retention of students from different backgrounds and review of the systems in place to encourage participation. (Recommendation 6.15)	1  (recommendations concerning academic, organisational & other matters <u>entirely under the control of the unit</u> )	<p>The School is represented on the UCD Widening Participation committee and reports to the SVM executive and Programme Board. The SVM has a dedicated committee (the School EDI and Athena Swan Committee) to initiate the University for All Implementation Plan of the Widening Participation committee. Establishing an additional access route on grounds of Mature Entry to Veterinary Medicine (DN300) (Sept 2023) will enhance the access cohort to 15 percent, which is a small step towards meeting the target set by the National Plan for Equity of Access to higher education.</p> <p>The widening participation data for our Veterinary nursing program are much above the national and university average. Retention is not an issue for the SVM due to the attrition rates being historically very low. The Vet Athena SWAN committee is currently working on developing approaches to capture data to identify the factors responsible for students leaving both the</p>	<b>Dr. Arun Kumar</b>  School representative at the UCD Widening Participation committee	A

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			<p>veterinary medicine and veterinary nursing programmes.</p> <p>There is also a significant amount of outreach ongoing in the School that we will continue to build on. Please see two examples below:</p> <p>An academic staff member of the UCDVH is involved with a team of UCD academics to promote confidence in primary school children from a lower socioeconomic background in the completion of 3rd level education.</p> <p>The UCD Vet school has also participated in outreach to national and secondary schools. This outreach has involved 5 different schools, 2 secondary, 3 national schools (3 of which are DEIS schools). This has involved training in the use of microscopes and slides of veterinary interest to encourage the uptake of veterinary and scientific courses. For the national schools this has involved science demonstrations for their students to show them how enjoyable a career in Veterinary Medicine could be.</p>		
7.14	The RG recommend the School encourage more uptake among students of courses such as the manual handling training courses which are	1  (recommen dations concerning	The veterinary nursing students will continue to participate in manual handling certification in Stage 1 of the course. This training is currently provided by external manual handling education providers and paid for by the	<b>Dr Robin Farrell</b>  Programme Director	C

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1. Prioritised Recommendations					
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	offered by the UCD SIRC Office. These would be particularly relevant to the School's Veterinary Nursing students. (Recommendation 7.14)	academic, organisational & other matters <u>entirely under the control of the unit</u>	school budget. The school has investigated a bespoke manual handling course that could be offered by SIRC. The SIRC office in UCD does not provide this service for students. The senior management team is currently exploring two options for manual handling training that can be delivered to all undergraduate students (Veterinary Nursing and Veterinary Medicine) in the school. We anticipate that a sustainable solution to training all student cohorts in advance of placements will be resolved within a 2–3-year time period.	Veterinary Nursing	

2. Organisation, Management and Staffing of the School					
RG Report (Paragraph Reference)	RG Recommendation	Category (See above list)	Action Taken/Planned	Lead (E.g. Name of Faculty/Staff/ Group)	Timescale
2.14	The RG recommend the School introduce a formal process for staff induction to ensure that all administrative bases are covered for all staff. Consideration should also be given to introducing an informal 'buddy system' as part of the induction. (Recommendation 2.14)	1  (recommendations concerning academic, organisational & other matters <u>entirely under the</u>	See 1. Prioritised Recommendations above.		

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2. Organisation, Management and Staffing of the School					
RG Report (Paragraph Reference)	RG Recommendation	Category (See above list)	Action Taken/Planned	Lead (E.g. Name of Faculty/Staff/ Group)	Timescale
		<u>control of the unit)</u>			
2.15	Several clinical areas are understaffed, as is common in the sector. Many UK universities address this critical issue, in part, through the use of additional payments made to clinical staff, often funded from the commercial income that they effectively bring in through clinical work. In some cases this is a clinical supplement and in other cases this is through enhanced out of hours payments. The RG recommend the School explore whether such an approach could be developed to provide additional incentives within the UCD system. (Recommendation 2.15)	3  (recommen dations concerning inadequate staffing, and/or facilities which require additional recurrent or capital funding)	See 1. Prioritised Recommendations above.		
2.16	There were several references made during the site visit to the UCD Veterinary Hospital being loss making. The RG found that the budgeting processes that may underlie this perception do not appear to consider the costs of teaching, which is the major output from the hospital. The RG is of the opinion that working in an	1  (recommen dations concerning academic, organisational & other matters <u>entirely</u>	The School will consult with an economic specialist to put a financial value on the teaching delivered in the UCD Veterinary Hospital.  Rather than simply reflecting on the monetary costs of running the UCDVH it will be important to consider the true economic value of the clinical teaching in the UCDVH in the context of the review of the School's Strategic plan which will take place in 2024.	<b>Assoc. Prof. Rory Breathnach</b> Clinical Director	C

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2. Organisation, Management and Staffing of the School					
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	enterprise regarded as loss making includes implied criticism. The RG recommend that alongside the necessary drives to constantly improve efficiency, the UCD Veterinary Hospital should no longer be described as loss making. It is important to ensure that the great value placed on clinical teaching by the School is not diminished unintentionally.	<u>under the control of the unit)</u>			
2.17	The RG recommend the School ensure that the benefits from faculty engagement in strategic planning processes are recognised through their continued involvement in regular away day and planning meetings.	1  (recommen dations concerning academic, organisation al & other matters <u>entirely under the control of the unit)</u>	In advance of the next School strategic plan 2025-2030, the School will facilitate an away day in the second Trimester for a planning meeting with heads of sections as well as members of the SMT.  Additionally, the External Advisory Board meet once a year currently to review strategic and School activities.	<b>Prof. Michael Doherty</b> Dean & HOS	C

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<b>3. Quality of Programmes and Student Learning Experience</b>					
RG Report (Paragraph Reference)	RG Recommendation	Category (See above list)	Action Taken/Planned	Lead (E.g. Name of Faculty/Staff/ Group)	Timescale
3.17	The RG recommend that all school staff who interact with students in an educational capacity should receive education in pedagogy that is relevant to their role.	1  (recommendations concerning academic, organisational & other matters <u>entirely under the control of the unit</u> )	See 1. Prioritised Recommendations above.		
3.18	The RG recommend the School explores and identifies a local “best practice” approach to the provision of learning materials for students (lecture slides, lecture notes, etc) and communicates this to staff and students, facilitating (although not necessarily obligating) a more consistent approach and improved management of student expectations.	1  (recommendations concerning academic, organisational & other matters <u>entirely under the control of the unit</u> )	Consistency in approach which encompasses ‘best practice’ is promoted through the Curriculum Review Committee on an ongoing basis. The new Centre for Veterinary Education will support this endeavour. (see also 6.13 prioritised recommendation above)	<b>Assoc. Prof. Sue Rackard</b> Assoc. Dean for Teaching & Learning	B
3.19	The “10 + 10” credit approach taken with the pathobiology modules represents an example of excellent practice, allowing integration of content and concepts in	1  (recommendations concerning	An agreement for module integration involving 4 modules in Stage 4 has been reached by the HOS and the Subject Heads to create 5 ECTS for a Clinical Skills	<b>Assoc. Prof. Sue Rackard</b>	C

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3. Quality of Programmes and Student Learning Experience					
RG Report (Paragraph Reference)	RG Recommendation	Category (See above list)	Action Taken/Planned	Lead (E.g. Name of Faculty/Staff/ Group)	Timescale
	teaching and assessment as well as the use of a case-based approach. The RG recommend that others involved in programme design look for opportunities to build on and replicate this model.	academic, organisational & other matters <u>entirely under the control of the unit</u>	module in year 4. This plan will be presented to programme board in Autumn 2023.	Assoc. Dean for Teaching & Learning	

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4. UCD Veterinary Hospital					
RG Report (Paragraph Reference)	RG Recommendation	Category (See above list)	Action Taken/Planned	Lead (E.g. Name of Faculty/Staff/ Group)	Timescale
4.10	The RG recommend that more explicit attention be given to preparing students for rotation learning in the clinical setting. For example, ensuring that there is an awareness of the role and responsibilities of the students particularly in relation to client communication and history-taking and support and direction is provided for when they will be working independently (i.e., without a resident/ intern or faculty member present).	1  (recommendations concerning academic, organisational & other matters <u>entirely under the control of the unit</u> )	Formal induction (whole afternoon) will take place for Stage 4 students early in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> trimester at which information relating to all rotations (including roles and responsibilities) will be provided by appropriate clinicians to include information on timetabling, electives, etc. This will also include a Q&A and will be overseen by the final year Stage Coordinator and the Clinical Director.  We will also provide a UCD Veterinary Hospital tour to orientate all students for each rotation. On-going supports for the students whilst on rotation are provided as required by the clinical teams in the Hospital with the oversight of the Clinical Lead for each rotation (e.g., Diagnostic Imaging, Anaesthesia etc.).	<b>Assoc. Prof. Rory Breathnach</b> Clinical Director	B
4.11	The RG recommend that the timetable for rotations for both Veterinary Medicine and Veterinary Nursing students is released significantly earlier than currently.	1  (recommendations concerning academic, organisational & other matters <u>entirely under the control of the unit</u> )	Please see Recommendation 4.10 above.	<b>Assoc. Prof. Rory Breathnach</b> Clinical Director	C



## UCD School of Veterinary Medicine -Quality Improvement Plan

5. Quality of Postgraduate Research Education and Research Activity					
RG Report (Paragraph Reference)	RG Recommendation	Category (See above list)	Action Taken/Planned	Lead (E.g. Name of Faculty/Staff/ Group)	Timescale
5.16	The RG noted that the uptake of sabbatical leave by staff in the School is currently low overall, for example only three of the school's staff took sabbatical leave during 2017 to 2022. The RG recommend the School look to ensure greater use of sabbatical leave entitlement for all staff.	1  (recommen dations concerning academic, organisation al & other matters <u>entirely</u> <u>under the</u> <u>control of</u> <u>the unit</u> )	Information workshop(s) on taking sabbaticals to be led by the School's HR Partner. HR Partner will align this action with the P4G process and brief the School reviewers. This workshop will be refreshed annually through the P4G process if required.	<b>Mr Enda Bennett</b>  HR Partner	B
5.17	The RG noted a sector wide challenge in supporting the research careers of clinicians who may never have held significant research funding, nor have worked in a research group with significant external funding. The RG recommends that the School consider opportunities to match clinicians with internationally recognised research groups, making use of the School's	1  (recommen dations concerning academic, organisation al & other matters <u>entirely</u>	A Research Day organised by the recently formed Clinical Research Board (CRB) took place on the 1 <sup>st</sup> of June 2023 and was open to all School Academic Staff. A series of workshops will follow on from this Research Day. These workshops will seek to inform what's happening in the clinical research area and further develop and enhance linkages between clinical research in the UCDVH and the pre-clinical and para-clinical areas within the School and external to the School to generate networking opportunities	<b>Dr. Cliona Skelly</b>  Clinical Research Board Chair	C

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5. Quality of Postgraduate Research Education and Research Activity					
RG Report (Paragraph Reference)	RG Recommendation	Category (See above list)	Action Taken/Planned	Lead (E.g. Name of Faculty/Staff/ Group)	Timescale
	excellent laboratory facilities available both in the School and on the campus (e.g. Conway Institute). Uptake of sabbatical leave by clinicians could then be used to embed time for mentoring and research.	<u>under the control of the unit)</u>	<p>for research collaboration ideas. The in-house and UCD mentoring programmes for academic staff have been and will continue to be important for clinicians in supporting their career progression within the university.</p> <p>The School has recruited a dedicated Clinical Research Nurse (July, 2023) and collaboration and support from the UCD Medical Clinical Research Centre with the CRB and SVM will aid in the development of clinical research going forward.</p> <p>A number of small awards have been made to clinical staff to help fund their research using OIP funding. The SVM has also just appointed and partially funding a post as part of the Irish Clinical Academic Training (ICAT2) and will have another post in the coming year.</p>		
5.18	The School noted that it received only one Ad Astra post through the University fellowship programme from the four nominations put forward. The RG recommend the School ensures it maximises opportunities for success in such schemes by recognising how the	2  (recommendations concerning shortcomings in services,	Working closely with the College Principal, the School is taking a strategic approach to the Ad Astra fellowship programme which will guarantee at least two positions.	<b>Prof. Michael Doherty</b> Dean & HOS	B

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5. Quality of Postgraduate Research Education and Research Activity					
RG Report (Paragraph Reference)	RG Recommendation	Category (See above list)	Action Taken/Planned	Lead (E.g. Name of Faculty/Staff/ Group)	Timescale
	broader University rather than the veterinary sector views individuals and success. The RG recommend also that the School takes advice from the College Principal earlier in the nomination process in future Ad Astra calls.	procedures and facilities which are <u>outside the control of the unit)</u>			
5.19	The RG recommends that the School explores with the College how post-grant support for improved grant management could be enhanced.	1 (recommendations concerning academic, organisational & other matters <u>entirely under the control of the unit)</u>	A School Research Officer is expected to be in position shortly. This is a new School role, to provide bespoke research support, primarily pre-award, to all research-active staff. Within UCD Research (centrally), major changes are currently underway, including a UCD POST (Programme for Operation and Service transformation) project focusing on 'Best Practice in Post Award Research Support ( <a href="https://www.ucd.ie/ucdpost/programmeactivity/whathishappening/bestpracticeinpostawardresearchsupport/">https://www.ucd.ie/ucdpost/programmeactivity/whathishappening/bestpracticeinpostawardresearchsupport/</a> ) to improve post-award support for UCD researchers.	<b>Prof. Simon More</b> Assoc. Dean for Research, Innovation & Impact	B

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6. Management of Quality and Enhancement					
RG Report (Paragraph Reference)	RG Recommendation	Category (See above list)	Action Taken/Planned	Lead (E.g. Name of Faculty/Staff/ Group)	Timescale
6.13	<p>Considerable emphasis is currently placed on day-to-day interactions with staff where feedback can be provided and while these informal mechanisms are important and reflect the strong sense of community within the School, more formal mechanisms ensure that everyone has an opportunity to be heard and is aware of how to provide feedback. The RG recommend the School develops a systematic framework for student feedback via fora such as Staff-Student Liaison meetings, with an agenda, minutes, clear leadership and clear communication of the School responses to feedback. (Recommendation 6.13)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>(recommendations concerning academic, organisational &amp; other matters <u>entirely under the control of the unit</u>)</p>	<p>See 1. Prioritised Recommendations above.</p>		
6.14	<p>The RG recommend the School considers seeking feedback from very recent graduates, to see how their university experience and training has prepared them for their early career, and what challenges they are facing.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>(recommendations concerning academic, organisational &amp; other matters)</p>	<p>This already happens through the graduate survey which targets graduates at 1-3 years post-graduation. The School also participates in the VSC graduate survey to gather feedback from grads working in the UK which is a common destination for UCD Graduates</p>	<p><b>Assoc. Prof. Sue Rackard</b> Assoc. Dean for Teaching &amp; Learning</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">A</p>

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6. Management of Quality and Enhancement					
RG Report (Paragraph Reference)	RG Recommendation	Category (See above list)	Action Taken/Planned	Lead (E.g. Name of Faculty/Staff/ Group)	Timescale
		<u>entirely under the control of the unit)</u>	Additionally, the School (Director, SVM & Communications Manager) has established a Young Alumni Ambassadors Group for Veterinary Medicine & Veterinary Nursing graduates to provide the School with feedback from recent graduates, serve as a sounding board for new ideas and act as a peer-to-peer network through which alumni can bring feedback and suggestions to the School. Introductory meetings have taken place with all 20 members and the first group meeting will take place in Summer 2023.		
6.15	The RG recommend a review and enhancement of widening participation within the School. This could include putting in place a system to track progress and retention of students from different backgrounds and review of the systems in place to encourage participation. (Recommendation 6.15)	1  (recommendations concerning academic, organisational & other matters <u>entirely under the control of the unit)</u>	See 1. Prioritised Recommendations above.		

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7. Support Services					
RG Report (Paragraph Reference)	RG Recommendation	Category (See above list)	Action Taken/Planned	Lead (E.g. Name of Faculty/Staff/ Group)	Timescale
7.14	The RG recommend the School encourage more uptake among students of courses such as the manual handling training courses which are offered by the UCD SIRC Office. These would be particularly relevant to the School's Veterinary Nursing students. (Recommendation 7.14)	1  (recommendations concerning academic, organisational & other matters <u>entirely under the control of the unit</u> )	See 1. Prioritised Recommendations above.		
7.15	While the student support within the School is excellent, it is important that the School can provide continued support for students undertaking extra-mural studies. The RG recommend the School reviews its pastoral care to ensure it is sustainable and not over-reliant on a small number of outstanding, yet possibly overstretched key staff.	1  (recommendations concerning academic, organisational & other matters <u>entirely under the control of the unit</u> )	The School has Peer Mentor and Big Sibling programmes for students. These programmes are designed to support incoming students by assigning them to a current undergraduate student who will share their own experiences, challenges, and insights of the programme, including extra-mural studies.  The CEMS Tutor Programme, implemented in academic year 2021/2022, was established to increase support for students on their CEMS journey as they move through the programme. Each student is assigned a CEMS Tutor who will be with them until they complete CEMS in final year. The role of the CEMS Tutor is to help students enhance	<b>Laura Barnes</b>  Clinical Placements Manager	A

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7. Support Services					
RG Report (Paragraph Reference)	RG Recommendation	Category (See above list)	Action Taken/Planned	Lead (E.g. Name of Faculty/Staff/ Group)	Timescale
			<p>their learning opportunities on placement through facilitated dialogue of common experiences, reflection and providing guidance.</p> <p>The School recently recruited a Clinical Placements Manager. This role was developed to manage the administration of placements within the School and provide a high level of support to students.</p> <p>Currently, every student receives an EMS and Placement Support Card before they go on placement which includes contact details of all the supports available to students when they are on-and-off campus. The process of support in relation to extramural clinical placement is under regular review based on student feedback and is part of a broader discussion with the UK Schools of Veterinary Medicine as part of Veterinary Schools Council.</p>		

## UCD School of Veterinary Medicine -Quality Improvement Plan

8. External Relations					
RG Report (Paragraph Reference)	RG Recommendation	Category (See above list)	Action Taken/Planned	Lead (E.g. Name of Faculty/Staff/ Group)	Timescale
8.7	<p>The RG recommends that consideration be given to developing a more structured framework to ensure the ongoing quality of Extra-Mural Studies (EMS) so that both students and providers are supported and clear on what is expected of them and to examine ways in which the system can be improved. While the often-requested skills checklists are typically not appropriate, there may be alternatives that the School could explore that would help the EMS providers know what is expected of them in terms of the outcomes which the students can or would ideally achieve during their placements. This could include providing short, recorded presentations (webinars etc) explaining students' needs during EMS, encouraging students to define their intended learning outcomes prior to EMS placements, or providing online resources that explain the skills, applied knowledge and professional competences that EMS can usefully reinforce.</p>	<p>1  (recommendations concerning academic, organisational &amp; other matters <u>entirely under the control of the unit</u>)</p>	<p>The School is active in this area. A PhD focusing on 'Promoting students' self-regulated learning (SRL) as they transition to learning in a clinical workplace environment is near completion. This research seeks to explore how dialogue can be structured to support conversations between students and academic advisors to promote students' SRL during clinical experiences.</p> <p>The following activities are currently in place to support students and providers and to ensure both are clear on what is expected of them during placements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students are invited to a CEMS induction session prior to commencing their CEMS journey. This session covers all aspects of the CEMS module including student requirements, expectations, and acceptable behaviour while on placement, health&amp; safety and gathering feedback.</li> <li>2. Every student is provided with a CEMS Student Handbook which is a detailed and comprehensive guide to CEMS including full</li> </ol>	<p><b>Laura Barnes</b>  Clinical Placements Manager</p>	<p>C</p>



## UCD School of Veterinary Medicine -Quality Improvement Plan

8. External Relations					
RG Report (Paragraph Reference)	RG Recommendation	Category (See above list)	Action Taken/Planned	Lead (E.g. Name of Faculty/Staff/ Group)	Timescale
			<p>details of requirements pre and post CEMS placement.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. All students attending CEMS placements must have completed the CEMS driving licence before they start, this gives them guidance on how to conduct themselves in a veterinary practice.</li> <li>4. When submitting a Myplacement form for approval, students must outline their intended learning outcomes and what they hope to achieve for that specific placement. This will help to form a starting point for conversations with the practice and allow the student to reflect on their learnings at the end of the placement.</li> <li>5. As part of the CEMS Tutor Programme, each student meets with their CEMS Tutor at least once per trimester. Students submit a CEMS progress report to their tutor prior to their meeting which summarises the student's CEMS progress to date, intended learning outcomes, reflections and future plans. Through the CEMS Tutor Programme,</li> </ol>		

## UCD School of Veterinary Medicine -Quality Improvement Plan

8. External Relations					
RG Report (Paragraph Reference)	RG Recommendation	Category (See above list)	Action Taken/Planned	Lead (E.g. Name of Faculty/Staff/ Group)	Timescale
			<p>feedback is gathered to inform further areas for student support.</p> <p>6. The EMS website provides resources for placement providers accepting students for EMS. Placement providers are directed here to prepare for accepting a student on placement. The website provides up to date information on what is taught in each year, expectations of the placement provider and the students on placement as well as an insurance statement.  <a href="https://www.ucd.ie/vetmed/study/clinicaalextramuralstudies/">https://www.ucd.ie/vetmed/study/clinicaalextramuralstudies/</a></p> <p>7. The School has a free CVE webinar available to placement providers called '<b>Train the Trainer: An Educational Resource</b>' for those supporting students on Clinical Extra Mural Studies (CEMS) in clinical settings. This webinar has recently been approved for renewal by the VCI and the School is currently working to make this available on the website for 2023. An intention of the newly established (March 2023) UCD Centre for Veterinary Education is to develop CVE for</p>		

## UCD School of Veterinary Medicine -Quality Improvement Plan

8. External Relations					
RG Report (Paragraph Reference)	RG Recommendation	Category (See above list)	Action Taken/Planned	Lead (E.g. Name of Faculty/Staff/ Group)	Timescale
			CEMS providers as well as intra-mural teachers.		

## UCD School of Veterinary Medicine -Quality Improvement Plan

### 3. Prioritised Resource Requirements

#### 1. Clinical pay scales/supplement increases in the UCD Veterinary Hospital (to include interns, veterinary nurses and residents)

**Recommendation 2.15:** Several clinical areas are understaffed, as is common in the sector. Many UK universities address this critical issue, in part, through the use of additional payments made to clinical staff, often funded from the commercial income that they effectively bring in through clinical work. In some cases this is a clinical supplement and in other cases this is through enhanced out of hours payments. The RG recommend the School explore whether such an approach could be developed to provide additional incentives within the UCD system.

#### Planned Action

The SVM has continually made the case to the University for the need to incentivise clinical staff to ensure continued high-level input and retention. This is a particular area of concern in relation to preventing the loss of highly valued staff to the private sector. The out-of-hours pay scales were agreed at the time (circa 2006) with the relevant government department however have not been reviewed for many years; in addition, they relate to being “on call” rather than performing additional clinical work at nights or weekends. As such, the monetary benefits are relatively low. Over the last year, the Dean and the Clinical Director of the UCD Veterinary Hospital have commenced discussions with UCD Finance to seek either enhanced On-Call pay rates, or an additional fee based on the performance of actual clinical duties (e.g., additional pay per hour of surgery). As part of this process, we have also highlighted the option of an agreed clinical supplement as part of the annual salary package, like the case pertaining in some UK Schools of Veterinary Medicine. All these options will need central University financial support. The School has also sought enhanced pay scales for more junior clinical staff (entry-level nurses, residents etc.) who find themselves on narrower pay scale bands. The School uses hospital income to incentivise staff by paying for additional conference attendance, discipline-specific equipment to facilitate clinical research, or advanced CPD (e.g. hip-replacement courses) where justified.

In order to provide the additional financial resources required to comply with this recommendation, a high-level review will be necessary involving UCD Finance and UCD HR.

#### Estimate of the cost

An accurate estimation of this cost will only be possible following the planned meeting of the Dean, College Principal, College Finance Officer and UCD’s Senior Finance Officer.

#### 2. Financial resources to allow staff in the School to take sabbatical leave

**Recommendation 5.16** The RG noted that the uptake of sabbatical leave by staff in the School is currently low overall, for example only three of the school’s staff took sabbatical leave during 2017 to 2022. The RG recommend the School look to ensure greater use of sabbatical leave entitlement for all staff.

#### Planned Action

Information workshop(s) on taking sabbaticals to be led by the School’s HR Partner. HR Partner will align this action with the P4G process and brief the School reviewers. This will be refreshed annually through the P4G process if required.

## UCD School of Veterinary Medicine -Quality Improvement Plan

### Estimate of the cost

The model for financial resourcing is to be determined.

- 3. Financial resources for the expansion of the UCD Centre for Veterinary Education which will offer CPD in pedagogy relevant to training all School staff in a more structured way. This action will require administrative support and a budget for training.**

**Recommendation 3.17** The RG recommend that all school staff who interact with students in an educational capacity should receive education in pedagogy that is relevant to their role.

### Planned Action

The UCD Centre for Veterinary Education was established in March 2023 following approval of the proposal by Academic Council.

The objectives of this new combined research and CPD Centre, under the Directorship of Associate Professor Sue Rackard are as follows:

- Conduct and disseminate research on topics in veterinary medical education to inform and enhance veterinary medical educational curriculum design practice.
- Collaborate and undertake educational research projects with local, national and international partners.
- Provide pedagogical, assessment and evaluation support for educators of veterinary medicine to implement research-based teaching.

### Estimate of the cost

- One full time Administrative Officer A01(€65,549)
- Non-staff pay budget for training of € 60,000.